

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please delete paragraphs [0011], [0012], and [0013].

Please amend the following paragraphs as follows:

[0063] ~~Fig. 3B illustrates an exemplary~~ A word based lottery play slip ~~370~~ similar to the lottery play slip 300 described in Fig. 3 is described as follows. The word based lottery play slip ~~370~~ may include many of the general components described in connection with the lottery play slip 300, these components may be, among other things, the title 304, directions 306, general game selections 308, wager 312, number of games 314, quick pick 316, and manual selection area 318. The word based lottery play slip ~~370~~ may further include a section by which a player can manually select a phrase. The manual selection area 318 may allow the player to code the word or play phrase ~~372~~ by filling in an indicator bubble ~~374~~ corresponding to an indicated letter ~~376~~. For example, the player may choose the play phrase ~~372~~ “The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over the Lazy Dog” which, in turn, ~~[[my]]~~ may be coded as described above. In other words, the player may write the desired word or play phrase ~~372~~ along the top of the play slip ~~370~~, and then fill in the indicator bubbles ~~374~~ to create a machine-readable format. The indicator bubble ~~374~~ may be filled in by a selection mark ~~378~~ that may be a No. 2 pencil mark, ink, or any other magnetically, or optically readable sign.

[0064] The coded word based lottery play slip ~~370~~ may, in turn, be imported into the lottery terminal unit 104 via the lottery play slip reader 132. In this way, the play phrase may be translated into a computer readable format and stored locally in the memory 202 or RAM 206 depending on the configuration of the lottery system. Alternatively, the information may be communicated to the lottery server 106 and/or directly transmitted through the network 110 to the central lottery host 134. The central lottery host 134 may, in turn, store the information in the memory 138, the RAM 142 and the database 154.

[0065] In the alternative, the word lottery may be implemented as either a quick-pick or “scratch off” game. Automatic selections may be printed on a quick-pick, preprinted on cards, displayed on a monitor or screen, or listed in any other player accessible medium. A “scratch off” word based lottery game may arrange the word

based lottery ticket 380 to include a preprinted play phrase 372 and a plurality of covered selections representing a randomly generated, independent alphabetic sequence. The player may "scratch off" or remove the covering to see the character string and if the words in the phrase match the character string, the player wins the prize associated with that word.

[0066] In another alternative, a quick-pick or scratch off has a play phrase 372 with prizes on it but does not have a character string 386 printed on it. The player can have his quick-pick or scratch off scanned to produce a separate ticket that contains the character string 386 which can be selected randomly and independently of the play phrase 372 on the quick-pick or scratch off. That is, the character string 386 does not "know" the contents of the quick-pick or scratch off. If one or more words in the phrase match the character string 386, the player wins the prize associated with those words.

[0067] In yet another alternative, the player may customize the lottery ticket 380 at a player-activated terminal 104, 116. The player may be able to create the play phrase 372 and adjust, within some predefined constraints, the way prizes are assigned to the phrase. The word lottery ticket 380 can be produced including the customized or desired phrase 372 and the associated prizes. The resulting word lottery ticket 380 can then be scanned by the retailer to produce a second ticket with an character string 386. If one or more words in the play phrase 372 match the character string 386, the player wins the prize associated with those words.

[0068] Regardless of the manner in which the play phrase 372 is defined or the general way in which the optional word based lottery play slip 370 is configured, a word lottery ticket 380 memorializing the desired play phrase 372 may be printed by the ticket printer 133 integral to the lottery terminal unit 104. Generally, the word based lottery ticket 380 may include the same general components described in connection with the lottery play ticket 302, these components specifically may include, among other things, the title 320, game area 322, status area 324, advertising area 326, coding area 328 including the tracking number 330 and graphical code 332.

[0069] ~~Referring specifically to the components indicated in Fig. 3C, the~~ A word lottery ticket 380 may provide a confirmation phrase 382 corresponding to the play phrase 372 coded on the optional word based lottery play slip 370. A prize amount 384,

corresponding to the potential winning value assigned to a given word or letter grouping, may be displayed to provide information to the player or to build player excitement and enjoyment. The play phrase 372 with the associated prize amounts 384 may be assigned to the player or the player may select his phrase from a menu of phrases or he may create his own phrase via a play slip or by inputting (e.g. typing) the phrase into a player-activated terminal.

[0070] The player may also have some control as to the actual prize ~~amount~~ amounts 384 on the lottery ticket 380, for example, the player may opt for a higher top prize in which case the prizes amounts 384 can be reconfigured to reflect the higher maximum prize amount 384. It will be understood that this customization does not have to affect the overall expected return to the player. The play phrase 372 and the associated prizes 384 may be placed on the ticket or displayed on some type of electronic display unit such as that on a player-activated terminal. The associated prizes 384 may be identified with individual words in a variety of ways, for example, it may be expressed immediately after the word in parentheses or directly above or below the words. Regardless of the location of the prize amount 384 relative to the play phrase 372, it is important for the association between the two to be clearly evident to the player.

[0071] Once the play phrase 372 and the associated prize amount 384 have been determined, a randomly generated, independent character string 386 can be produced. The character string 386 can be any a sequence of letters that may or may not include repeated letters. The character string 386 can typically be produced in a randomized process independently of the play phrase 372 and the associated prizes. For example, the letters or characters could be placed on balls and drawn from a hopper or blower, either with or without replacement, as are numbers in a lottery game. The letters can be generated by a computer based on any desired frequency or statistical distribution.

[0072] The character string 386 is randomly and independently generated with respect to the play phrase 372. It will be understood that generation of the character string 386 can be accomplished in through a variety of processes. However, regardless of the generation process employed each possible outcome can be assigned a probability. This is what allows the assignment of precise prizes. The correlation between the character string 386 and the words in the phrase determines the winners. For example,

the game could be defined such that there are no repeats allowed in the character string 386 and each letter can be used as many times as desired. A word is "won" if it can be formed from the letters contained within the character string 386 wherein each letter in the character string 386 can be used as many times as desired.

[0073] Another way of playing may be to allow repetition in the character string 386. To match or win a word it is necessary for the letter in the character string 386 to appear at least as many times as in the word. Still another way of playing would be for a word to match or win if it contains all of the characters of the drawn character string 386. Whatever the method by which it is produced, and criteria by which a match or winner is determined, the character string 386 can be imparted to the player in a number of ways. For example, the character string 386 can be placed on the same ticket as the play phrase, or placed onto a separate ticket.

[0074] Another way of imparting the character string 386 to the player is to display it on the display 146, 128. The character string 386 would apply to not just one player but to a group of players enrolled in a particular game through the central lottery host 134 or lottery server 106. This particular embodiment has the advantage that it makes it apparent to the player that the character string 386 is indeed independent from his play phrase 372 as the character string 386 applies to multiple players with different phrases.

[0075] Still another way to derive the character string 386 is through a daily or biweekly drawing. The character string 386 could be made available to the player at the retailer, via the Internet, or traditional media, such as television or the newspaper.

[0076] Another way of imparting the character string 386 would be in the context of an electronic game wherein the play phrase 372 and associate prizes 384 can be displayed on the display 146, 128. After the player has made his wager, the character string 386 can be displayed, and winnings could be dispenses at the machine or in the form of a voucher. It will be understood that character string 386 may be selected or generated by any combination of the above-described methods.

[0077] ~~Fig. 3D illustrates the word lottery ticket 380 of Fig. 3C including a character string 386 representative of the randomly selected characters selected during the course the word based lottery game.~~ An alternate character string 388 may be

purchased by the player to increase the possibility of matching words or letter groups within the play phrase 372, and incidentally increasing the revenue of the word based lottery game. The character string 386 and the alternate character string 388 may be randomly selected to insure they are independent of the content of the play phrase 372.

[0078] As described above, word based lotteries may be implemented with virtually any text or phrase. A random sequence of letters determines the winning word(s). Through the sequence of letters is random it is produced by a definite process by which all possible outcomes can be assigned a probability. That is, though the character string 386 is determined randomly and independently of the text or phrase, the proportion of times that a given word will win can be precisely stated. This predictability allows the gaming establishment or organization to establish prizes commensurate with the amount of money to be returned to the player in the long run.

[0080] There are various ways to determine the character string. For example, letters defining the character string 386 could be treated like lottery balls and drawn at random (with or without replacement). In this case, common letters may occur in greater frequency, e.g. there could be 10 letter "E" lottery balls for every letter "Z" lottery ball. Alternatively, the character string 384 could also be produced by the letter distribution, as shown at block 473. The letter distribution may assign percentages to different letters in the alphabet. The character string 384 could be computer-generated based on such a distribution. Furthermore, if it is desired that there be no repeated letters in the character string 386, this could be accomplished by discarding character strings 386 with repeats until one occurs that has no repeats.

[0081] At block 475 play phrases 372 and prize amounts 384 may be assigned and determined. In one embodiment a player may create a personalized play phrase 372 while in another the play phrase 372 may be assigned. It will be understood that a combination of these assignment methods may be used depending on the needs and goals of the particular game. Predefined play phrases 372 can be, for example, quotes, film titles, fortune cookies, or even a simple list of words fitting a theme. Furthermore, these predefined play phrases 372 can be associated with predefined prize amounts 384 which

allows for better quality control and consistency. It may be desirable for all of the phrases to have prize amounts of similar magnitudes or prize values that conform to a certain aesthetic.

[0084] If the player decided to define his own words or text he may be prompted or choose, at block 480, to manually or interactively select the words or phrases to be played. If the player decides to manually enter the words to be played, as indicated at block 481, he may begin to manually enter the words into the lottery terminal unit 104 via the control panel 124 and input keys 126, or code the information onto a word based play slip 370. The resulting selection may be stored within the lottery terminal unit 104 in either the static program memory 202 or the RAM 206, as indicated at block 483. Alternatively the selection may be transmitted via the network 100 and/or the lottery network computer 106 to the central host 134 for storage in the memory 138, RAM 142 and/or database 154, depending on the configuration and operation of the lottery network 100.

[0086] It will be understood that regardless of whether the play phrase 372 was manually defined or selected from a predefined list, the chosen play phrase 372 may be displayed, as indicated at block 486, prior to the beginning of game play. The play phrase 372, like the graphical list described above, may be displayed on the lottery terminal display 128, the central host display 146 or any other desired output of or announcement device or system.

[0087] At block 492 the player may be allowed to reset the length of the character string 384 for some embodiments. In certain embodiments, there is a 1-1 correspondence between the player and the character string 384. That is, in some embodiments a specific character string 384 applies only to one player as opposed to a group of players. The player may desire a character string 384 of a different length. For example, his text might contain unusually long words that could not be won if the character string 384 was too short. At block 482 point, the set of words or phrase is verified to determine if it is viable or not. A set of words may not be viable for a game for a number of reasons. (For

example, the probabilities for winning may be too high to support decent prizes.) If a phrase is deemed not viable the player can go back to revise his phrase.

[0088] At block 487, the selected or manually entered play phrase 372 may be assigned prize values based on the predefined price point 469, percentage return 470, the definition of the character string 474, the winning criteria 473, and the process for producing the character string. Note, for the “selected phrases” the prizes may or may not have been already assigned, depending on the implementation. The player may have been presented with an interface which may be a part of the lottery terminal unit 104, 116, where he can control parameters such as the length of the alphabetic sequence and the general magnitude of the prizes. There may be maximum values imposed for top prizes, and certain parameters such as the Return would not be available to the player.

[0089] Once the set of words or phrase has been established and prize values assigned a character string 386 is produced, the character string 386 being random and independent of the set of words and/or phrase. The character string 386 is what determines which of the words in the set of words or phrase are “winners”. There are various ways to do this, the most straightforward being a word is a winner if the word can be formed with letter contained the character string 386, allowing each letter to be used as many times as necessary. For example, the drawn letters E-H-I-O-R-S-T contain O, T, H, E, and R, and if the word “other” in a portion of the play phrase 372 the player receives the associated prize value. In another exemplary embodiment if the word is larger than the drawing size (e.g. greater than seven letters) the player is awarded a prize if all of the drawn letters are contained within the evaluated word. For example, for the drawing containing the letters E-H-I-O-R-S-T, the player would win the prize associated with the word “otherwise” which contains all of the drawn letters.

[0090] After each word in the play phrase 372 has been evaluated to determine if it is a winner based on the character string 386, the total payout based on the individual prizes may be determined at block 490. The prize total, in turn, may be updated at 491 to reflect the winnings associated with the now-completed game. If the player did not match any words in the play phrase 372, the prize total may be updated with a zero value. Finally, the player may begin to play another round either by deciding to participate 477

or, if they chose to play multiple rounds during the completion of the word based lottery play slip 370.

[0091] It will be understood that the above identified example was intended to be illustrative of the word based lottery concept, and not to limit the concept to a particular form or implementation. Moreover, the basic concept may be executed in any lottery format including, but not limited to, a preprinted scratch off game, a video lottery executed on the lottery terminal unit 116 in a traditional lotto or powerball format, and a Pick-3/Pick-4 format. For example, the word based lottery concept may be played in Pick-3/Pick-4 format by using short play phrases 372 and conducting a nightly drawing, or in a scratch off format, as discussed above, by producing a preprinted ticket including the play phrase 372, ~~similar to the ticket illustrated in Fig. 3C~~, and a plurality of covered indicia and letters. The player, in turn, removes the covering to reveal the indicia and determine if a winning selection has been made. Similarly, the lotto, and Powerball games may be implemented by drawing balls or other items from a blower (not shown) to randomly select letters or indicia to be matched against a predefined or player selected play phrase 372. Furthermore, the word based lottery game may be implemented as a monitor similar to Keno, as described above, or may be played as a bonus, niche or specialty game depending on the needs of the gaming establishment or organization.